



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927
Fairfax, VA 22035-1118



For Immediate Release

Judy Pedersen, PIO

E-mail: parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov

Press Inquiries: 703-324-8662

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New Exhibit Highlights Sun, Stars And Satellites

From Sun and Stars to Satellites: Finding Our Place in Time and Space is on display at the Fairfax County Government Center now through May 21, 2006.

In honor of Virginia's Jamestown 2007 Commemoration, the exhibit features a unique brass sundial dating from the late 17th century. The sundial was found by archaeologists on the site of planter Joseph Petitt's circa 1690 estate near Jamestown. Certainly an indication of his wealth and education, it may also signify an interest in natural philosophy (science). The sundial is on loan from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Several other scientific instruments and objects are featured in the exhibit.

This display highlights the centuries-old importance of the sun and stars to path finding, navigation, time, mapping and surveying – to knowing where we are and where we are headed. Links across time are forged between the original Native American inhabitants of present-day Fairfax County, its early exploration by Captain John Smith, and the 20th century Herndon site where the Defense Mapping Agency conducted mapping and surveying using satellites. Today this site is the location of Observatory Park at Turner Farm, operated by the Analemma Society in partnership with the Park Authority as a center for astronomy education.

For more information contact Jeanne Niccolls, Park Authority Collections Manager at (703) 631-1429 or via email at resources@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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703-324-8700 • TTY: 703-324-3988 • ONLINE: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks • E-MAIL: parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov



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